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MEXICAN STUDENT CRISIS STILL UNRESOLVED

The Mexican Government seems willing to permit the students to continue their strike and air their grievances as long as demonstrations are peaceful.

The most recent mass march in the capital on 13 August appeared to be the largest demonstration to date. Although the march was orderly, slogans and chants were unusual in their vilification of the Mexican President, who traditionally is immune from personal attack. Student strikes in support of the Mexico City students have been announced in five states.

Although tourist and commercial interests have urged early action, the government appears to believe that if the students exhaust their energy in demonstrations now, they will be tranquil through the Olympics in October. It is making no concessions, however, and is appealing to the rest of the population to bring the students into line.

Mexico City's mayor, Corona del Rosal, who is the government's spokesman and could end up as the official scapegoat, has angered students with charges that the disturbances are a premature outburst in a plot to foment trouble between police and students. He has also implied Cuban involvement. Corona's most generous proposal to the students has been the formation of a commission to investigate charges of police brutality and student deaths, but he denies that anyone has been killed or that university autonomy has been violated.

President Diaz Ordaz has so far declined to lend his prestige to the government's position, possibly reserving the formidable weight of his personal involvement for a real crisis. On the other hand, in the past he has permitted crises to drag on for political purposes, and has shown a talent for destroying important politicians in a spectacular way.

A politician's inability to preserve the peace in the area of his charge has more than once provided the President with an excuse to abort a political career. Corona del Rosal has been mentioned as Diaz Ordaz' possible successor, and it is possible that the President has decided to "burn" him.